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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HEW-04 OES-06 DHA-02 SS-15 L-03 H-01
SAJ-01 USIA-06 NSC-05 SP-02 NSF-01 CU-02 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 /068 W
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R 281320Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4611

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2731

DEPT PASS DHEW/OHS/OIH FOR DR ERLICH

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, BIO, UR
SUBJECT: US-USSR MEDICAL EXCHANGE: FIRST HIGH-LEVEL LINKAGE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

1. SUMMARY: DR GOODWIN M BREININ, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL FOR US-USSR HEALTH
EXCHANGE, REPORTED TO SCICOUNS FEBRUARY 25 ON DISAPPOINTING TREATMENT MINISTRY OF HEALTH HAS AFFORDED HIS GROUP DURING DISCUSSIONS MOSCOW FEBRUARY 24/25. HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES APPARENTLY PLAYED PROMINENT PART IN HIS EXCEEDINGLY COLD RECEPTION BY DEPUTY MINISTER VENEDIKTOV. END SUMMARY.

2. BREININ STATED COUNCIL, ASSOCIATED WITH THE CITIZENS EXCHANGE CORPS USA, HAD BEEN INVITED TO MOSCOW BY DR NIKOLAI N BLOKHIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE USSR-USA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION, TO ARRANGE FOR A PROGRAM OF LONG-TERM EXCHANGES FOR PHYSICIAN TRAINING SPONSORED ON THE US PART BY PRIVATE INDUSTRY. HE REPORTED THAT DURING A LUNCHEON FEBRUARY 24 FOR THE US GROUP, DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH D VENEDIKTOV TOLD HIM "PRESIDENT CARTER MADE SOME STATEMENTS WHICH MAKE BILATERAL EXCHANGES DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE." BREININ REPORTED THAT IN 2 1/2 HOUR MEETING AT THE MOH FEBRUARY 25, VENEDIKTOV POINTEDLY REFUSED TO DISCUSS US PROTOCOL ON EXCHANGES.
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MEETING DEGENERATED INTO A RAMBLING MONOLOGUE BY BENEDIKTOV IN WHICH HE (1) DOUBTED THE "ALTURISM" OF THE US MEDICAL INDUSTRY (2) REFERRED TO A "BRAIN DRAIN AND IDEA DRAIN" (WHICH HIS INTERLOCUTATORS READ AS A CRITICISM OF SOVIET MEDICAL AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL EMIGRES WORKING IN THE UNITED STATES) AND (3) REMARKED THAT "THERE ARE MANY INMATES OF US MENTAL INSTITUTIONS WHO HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE US GOVERNMENT"(A CLEAR ALLUSION TO US CRITICISM OF SOVIET PSYCHIATRIC

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PRACTISES.)

3. BREININ IS DEPARTING MOSCOW FOR SAMARKAND AND RETURNING MARCH 6. HE
EXPRESED LITTLE HOPE THAT ANY POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS WILL CCOUR IN INTERIM ALTHOUGH HE STATED HE AND HIS GROUP WILL MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO HAVE HIS MANY AND INFLUENTIAL SOVIET CONTACTS AT THE RESEARCH LEVEL INTERCEDE WITH THE MOH TO OBTAIN A MORE FORTHCOMING OFFICIAL SOVIET RECEPTION. BREININ NOTED DISAPPOINTEDLY THAT ALTHOUGH COUNCIL IS VISITING UNDER THE INVITATION OF DR BLOKHIN, THE LATTER DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY DISCUSSION ALTHOUGH IT WAS KNOWN THAT HE IS IN MOSCOW.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST DIRECT INSTANCE WE HAVE OF THE SOVIETS LINKING A SPECIFIC BILATERAL PROGRAM TO THE CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS DEBATE. THE COUNCIL, WHICH HAS A TEN-YEAR HISTORY OF ACTIVITY WITH THE SOVIETS, SHOULD NORMALLY HAVE RECEIVED A WARM WELCOME. BREININ REPORTED THAT VENEDIKTOV WAS CAREFUL TO STATE THAT THE US-USSR HEALTH COOPERATION BILATERAL WAS STIL USEFUL AND WIL CONTINUE TO BE SUPPORTED. HOWEVER, THE SHARP ATTACK BY VENEDIKTOV, A SMOOTH AND HIGHLY EXPERIENCED SOVIET OFFICIAL IN INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL AFFAIRS, APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ORCHESTRATED TO REGISTER
SOVIET UNHAPPINESS WITH THE RECENT BILATERAL DEVELOPMENTS AND SIGNAL THAT SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL EXCHANGES CAN BE AFFECTED BY THE US HUMAN RIGHTS POSTURE.
TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, HEALTH, INVITATIONS, SCIENTIFIC VISITS, MEDICAL RESEARCH
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MOSCOW02731
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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From: MOSCOW
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Image Path:
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3289105
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-USSR MEDICAL EXCHANGE: FIRST HIGH-LEVEL LINKAGE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS
TAGS: PFOR, BTIO, UR, US, (BREININ, GOODWIN M), (BLOKHIN, NIKOLAI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b88317c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009